IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend Claims 1 and 2. Cancel Claims 10 and 11. Add new Claims 16 and 17. The changes are shown with ~~strikethroughs~~ for deleted matter and underlining for added matter. A complete listing of the claims is set out below, with proper claim identifiers.

1. (Currently Amended) A process for producing an oil and fat composition containing hydrophobic components of licorice, comprising mixing licorice with an oil and fat solvent containing 10% by weight or more of a fat-soluble polyhydric alcohol fatty acid ester in the oil and fat solvent.

2. (Currently Amended) The process for producing an ~~the~~ oil and fat composition containing hydrophobic components of licorice according to Claim 1, ~~further comprising using~~ wherein the licorice is mixed with the oil and fat solvent used together with at least one organic solvent selected from the group consisting of ethanol, acetone, and ethyl acetate.

3. (Original) The process for producing the oil and fat composition containing hydrophobic components of licorice according to Claim 2, wherein at least one organic solvent selected from the group consisting of ethanol, acetone, and ethyl acetate is mixed with licorice, and then the oil and fat solvent containing 10% by weight or more of the fat-soluble polyhydric alcohol fatty acid ester is mixed therewith.

4. (Previously Amended) The process for producing the oil and fat composition containing hydrophobic components of licorice according to Claim 1, wherein the oil and fat solvent contains only the fat-soluble polyhydric alcohol fatty acid ester.

5. (Previously Amended) The process for producing the oil and fat composition containing hydrophobic components of licorice according to Claim 1, wherein the fat-soluble polyhydric alcohol fatty acid ester is a glycerol fatty acid ester.

6. (Original) The process for producing the oil and fat composition containing hydrophobic components of licorice according to Claim 5, wherein the glycerol fatty acid ester is a monoglyceride and/or a diglyceride.

7. (Original) The process for producing the oil and fat composition containing hydrophobic components of licorice according to Claim 5, wherein the glycerol fatty acid ester is a medium-chain triglyceride.

8. (Original) The process for producing the oil and fat composition containing hydrophobic components of licorice according to Claim 5, wherein the glycerol fatty acid ester is a polyglycerol fatty acid ester.

9. (Original) The process for producing the oil and fat composition containing hydrophobic components of licorice according to Claim 8, wherein the polyglycerol fatty acid ester is a polyglycerol condensed ricinoleic acid ester.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Previously Added) An oil and fat composition containing hydrophobic components of licorice produced by the process according to Claim 6.

13. (Previously Added) An oil and fat-containing food comprising the oil and fat composition containing hydrophobic components of licorice according to Claim 12.

14. (Previously Added) An oil and fat composition containing hydrophobic components of licorice produced by the process according to Claim 7.

15. (Previously Added) An oil and fat-containing food comprising the oil and fat composition containing hydrophobic components of licorice according to Claim 14.

16. (New) A process for producing an oil and fat composition containing hydrophobic components of licorice, comprising the steps of:

providing an oil and fat solvent containing 10% or more by weight of a fat-soluble polyhydric alcohol fatty acid ester;

providing licorice in a form other than as an extract obtained by extraction with a common organic solvent;

mixing the licorice in said form with said oil and fat solvent containing 10% or more by weight of a fat-soluble polyhydric alcohol fatty acid ester; and

obtaining an oil and fat composition containing hydrophobic components of licorice by removing insolubles from the mixture.

17. (New) The process of Claim 16 further including the steps of:

mixing the licorice in said form with at least one organic solvent selected form the group consisting of ethanol, acetone, and ethyl acetate and, then;

mixing the oil and fat solvent containing 10% more by weight of the fat-soluble polyhydric alcohol fatty acid ester with the licorice and organic solvent mixture.